

FIRST PERSON: A seminal moment in our nation, Mississippi Baptist history

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On December 1, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments concerning a law passed by the Mississippi legislature in 2018. The law in question is the Mississippi Gestational Age Act, which places a moratorium on most abortions after 15 weeks. This seminal moment in our nation's history is vital for many reasons. If the Supreme Court rules the law is constitutional, fewer abortions will take place in Mississippi and that would be a good thing.

Psalm 139 reminds us that every person is “fearfully and wonderfully made” and every little baby is precious to our Heavenly Father. With X-Ray, 20/20 vision God watches over the growth and development of the child while yet in the mother's womb, and His power is on full display in the creation of human life before birth.

Because of the preciousness of every child and the significance of this case, we are calling on all Mississippi Baptists to observe a Day of Prayer and Fasting for an End of Abortion on Sunday, November 28.

What is the connection between prayer and fasting? Fasting is always accompanied with prayer, and it will boost your prayer life. Prayer coupled with fasting enables the Christian to focus. We focus a lot on food. Eating is one of our favorite pastimes, and we talk a lot about food. There are even towns named after foods. There's Chicken, Alaska...Two Egg, Florida...Rabbit Hash, Kentucky, and even a Hot Coffee, Mississippi.

Fasting is not a "diet in Jesus' name." It is not a way to lose weight and be blessed. Fasting is done for spiritual motives. Fasting is a time when we take the focus off ourselves, and put it on God and His will.

Distraction is the enemy of prayer and fasting. We get in our cars and turn on the radio. We go home and turn on the television. We arrive at the office and turn on the computer. Throughout the day we are constantly looking at our phones for the latest breaking news. Sunday, November 28 is a day of prayer and fasting, but first and foremost it is a day of worship.

Our focus should be on the Lord. In addition to fasting from food, why not fast from social media and television? Turn everything off and as best as possible. tune out the noise of the world and focus on God, His Word, His will – and pray.

We know we're supposed to pray. However, we are encouraged to pray more fervently when we face challenging circumstances that seem beyond our control. Jesus taught us this truth with a parable of the unrighteous judge and the poor widow. The judge was a man who did not "fear God or respect man" (Luke 18:1-8). However, he eventually answered the widow's request for help, primarily because of her persistence in asking.

Jesus' point was this: If an unrighteous judge would listen to a poor widow, how much more would God – a just and righteous judge – respond to those "who cry out to Him day and night?"

Imagine what God will do when thousands of Baptists and others across Mississippi join together to fast and pray and plead with the Lord for divine intervention upon the Supreme Court. Pray that He would give wisdom and courage to these jurists to respond in righteousness.

Blythe is director of evangelism and prayer ministry at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He may be contacted at rblythe@mbcb.org. Resources for the Nov. 28 Day of Prayer and Fasting for an End to Abortion can be downloaded [here](#).

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